

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

1. A device for temporarily immobilizing an area of tissue comprising:
- 5 a suction source;
- a member having a lumen, the lumen coupled to a suction port, the suction port positioned along a first planar surface of the member, the lumen coupled to the suction source, wherein suction to the lumen is communicated to the suction port; and
- 10 means for fixing the member to a stationary object.
2. The device of claim 1 wherein the member comprises an arm and a paddle, the paddle coupled to the arm by a hinge.
- 15 3. The device of claim 2 wherein the hinge comprises a malleable neck, the neck having a proximal end and a distal end, the distal end coupled to the arm, the distal end coupled to the paddle.

4. The device of claim 2 wherein the paddle may be fixed in an angular relationship to the arm by the hinge.

5 5. The device of claim 1 wherein the member further comprises an arm and a paddle, the paddle coupled to the arm at a first angle.

6. The device of claim 1 wherein the member further comprises an arm and a paddle, the paddle movably coupled to the arm at a first angle.

10 7. The device of claim 1 wherein the first planar surface of the member is curved.

15 8. The device of claim 2 wherein the lumen extending through the arm to the paddle, the lumen further extending through the arm to the suction port, the suction port positioned on the paddle.

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9. The device of claim 1 wherein the first planar surface is curved.

5 10. The device of claim 1 wherein the stationary object is an
operating table.

11. The device of claim 1 wherein the stationary object is a
retractor.

10 12. A device for immobilizing an area of tissue comprising:

a first member having a suction port along a first plane;

a second member having a suction port along the first plane, the
second member positioned apart from the first member such that an immobilized
area is defined between;

a securing device to secure the first member and the second member to an immobile object, the securing device coupled to the first member and the second member.

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13. The device of claim 12 wherein the first plane is curved.

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14. The device of claim 12 wherein the securing device comprises a first variable friction arm having at a first lockable elbow joint and a second first variable friction arm having at a second lockable elbow joint.

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15. The device of claim 12 further comprising a first suction source coupled to the first member and communicating with the suction port of the first member and a second suction source coupled to the second member and communicating with the suction port of the second member.

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16. A device for immobilizing an area of tissue comprising a member having a suction conduit therein, the suction conduit communicating

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with a suction port located along a first plane of the member, the suction conduit communicating with the suction port through a suction aperture, the suction port having a suction port diameter, the suction aperture having suction aperture diameter, the suction port diameter being greater than the suction aperture, the suction conduit coupleable to a suction source.

17. The device of claim 16 wherein the suction port diameter is three times greater than the suction aperture.

18. The device of claim 16 wherein the suction port has generally straight, cylindrical sides.

19. The device of claim 16 wherein the member is secured to a stationary object by a securing device.

20. A method of performing open or closed chest cardiac surgery comprising:

accessing a surface of the heart;
positioning a first member having a first suction port on the surface
of the heart;
coupling a suction source to the suction port of the first member;
5 creating a suction with the suction source, the created suction then
communicated to the first suction port;
grasping the surface of the heart with the suction in the first suction
port; and
fixing the first member to a stationary object;.

10 21. The method of claim 20 wherein the step of accessing a
surface of the heart comprises a cutting through an intercostal space.

15 22. The method of claim 20 wherein the step of accessing a
surface of the heart comprises inserting an endoscope and a cutting instrument

through the chest wall and cutting through the pericardium with the cutting instrument.

23. The method of claim 20 further comprising the steps of:

5 positioning a second member having a second suction port on the surface of the heart;

coupling a suction source to the suction port of the second member;

10 grasping the surface of the heart with the suction in the second suction port; and

fixing the second member to the stationary object.

24. The method of claim 23 further comprising the steps of moving the first member away from the second member. while maintaining the first member and the second member in grasping contact with the surface of the heart.

25. A method of immobilizing an area of tissue comprising:

contacting a first suction port on a first paddle to a planar surface of
tissue;

5 contacting a second suction port on a second paddle to the planar
surface of the tissue;

creating a suction in the first suction port to cause the first suction
port to grasp the planar surface of the tissue;

10 creating a suction in the second suction port to cause the second
suction port to grasp the planar surface of the tissue;

moving the first paddle away from the second paddle along the
planar surface of the tissue;

fixing the first paddle to a stationary object; and

fixing the second paddle to a stationary object.

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